

Alistair Petrie in Australia

Ellel: Ph 08 9622 5568 or Khesed 08 6363 5670

Thursday 26 April Hope City Church Cannington WA

Leadership in the 21st Century 10.30am – 2.30pm

Special session for indigenous Christians:

Restoring GOD's land 3.30 to 5.30 pm

followed by dinner at Carousel Food Hall.

**New DVD
NOW AVAILABLE:**

**GOD's FIRE
A Pocket of Fire
A Nation on Fire?**

available from Khesed
\$20 posted within Australia
or ask at your bookshop

AuSIL Expo 2012 Melbourne

14 April 10am-3pm

free

**Bible Translation in Australia –
the ongoing story**

- Top End singers
 - Arnhemland translators
- Interactive displays
 - Up-to-date information

Location:

**Foyer, Darebin Arts &
Entertainment Centre,
cnr Bell & St Georges Rd,
Preston VIC**

Further info:

**Wen Lee 0407 661 861
vicro_australia@wycliffe.org
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Inside:

Easter 2012	2
Aboriginal Sovereignty Day	2
Bobbie Hopkins story	3
Grasstree Gathering	4
NT Intervention	5
Sovereignty & the Tent Embassy	7
Bible Translation Expo	8

#86 April 2012

Khesed News

Restoring GOD's Land

One of the most significant issues today in Australia and many other parts of the world centres around the land we live in. It is GOD's land. He made it, and He made us from it, and He blesses us through it. But when it is sick because of sin, even GOD can't bless us as He wants to.

Canadian author and conference speaker, Rev Dr Alistair Petrie, wrote a clear prophetic book on this topic in 2000 that gives direction for indigenous Australian Christians and all Australians, as we struggle over Land Rights, Aboriginal Sovereignty and Recognition of the place of indigenous Australians in the land. *Releasing Heaven on Earth*, Chosen Books.

Alistair and his wife Marie will be in Brisbane with Ben Gray [City Harvest International], followed by a conference with Ellel Ministries at Springhill WA from 27-29 April. They will also be leading a session on *Leadership in the 21st Century Church* at Hope City Church, Leila St Cannington from 10.30 to 2.30 on Thursday 26 April.

Ellel have issued a special offer/invitation to indigenous Christians to attend this seminar, followed by time with Alistair on *Restoring GOD's land* from 3.30 to 5.30, followed by dinner at Carousel Food Hall.

Phone Ellel on 08 9622 5568
or Khesed on 08 6363 5670

A National Act of Recognition

Over recent months, Lindsay McDowell and Botany Bay Aboriginal elders have visited Aboriginal communities in West Australia, North Queensland and New South Wales to explain Recognition aims and objectives. Invitations for visits have come in from the Kimberley, South Australia and Northern Territory for this year. Lindsay reports:

“For the most part the Recognition Story is being received with joy. People have hopes that at long last the initial causes of our 240 year old unresolved issues (proper recognition denied to the earlier inhabitants of this land from the beginning in 1770, and as a consequence of that, the great deprivation endured by the people who were here, and the deep divide it all led to between earlier inhabitants and later arrivals) may now finally be addressed by the men and women of Australia.

“... a deep peace follows our visits. Faces are alive and full of joy, and yet also relaxed and tranquil...

“...a gathering that included church and political leaders at NSW Parliament House... I was told, “You could have heard a pin drop.”

“It appears very few Australians are aware of the entries recorded in the HM Bark Endeavour
continued on page 2 —>

-> **A National Act of Recognition**

log book. People everywhere in both Aboriginal/Islander and non Aboriginal/Islander communities are saying,

“We didn’t know this. It is so important that we go back to the start. There is so much these earliest events can teach us. This is a story that must be told (to the Australian people!)”

...It has the potential to unite the country like nothing else ever has.” (Aboriginal leader, Brisbane)

“...No other initiative is more important.” (Aboriginal elder, Perth)

A National Act of Recognition is a rapidly growing People’s Movement. We invite you all to visit our website, especially links to Introduction and Origins.
www.actofrecognition.org.au

Aboriginal Sovereignty Day - A Draft Proposal

1. On the 22nd August 1770, Captain James Cook planted a foreign flag on an Island belonging to Aboriginal nations, now called Possession Island, taking illegal possession of our lands and its resources, without the permission or knowledge of any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

2. We believe that no Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Peoples ceded or made treaties or agreements over their lands and all of its resources to any foreign nation or Peoples since time immemorial.

3. We believe that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples continue to maintain, to this day their sacred, spiritual, social, political and economic connections to their lands since

EASTER 2012

Many Aboriginal churches and groups hold conventions over Easter. We have heard on the grapevine that Tim Spoor [Lismore] is one of the speakers at Pinnacle Pocket QLD and Eddie Turpin [Pinnacle Pocket/Brisbane] is one of the speakers at Warburton Ranges WA this year, and Dan & Sue Armstrong at Mimili SA. That’s just a few of many!

“This is really good! We should learn it properly for next Easter.” This was a comment made by participants at the Bible Storying Workshop held near Blackstone last May.

“People of many cultures respond better to a story or drama than to listening to someone read the Scripture and for Ngaanyatjarra people, storytelling is part of life. After reading or listening to a passage several times, participants drew a series of pictures to show the main events. Then they closed their Bibles and told the story using the pictures as reference, and then moved on to telling it without the pictures. Some stories, eg the crucifixion, were then acted out.”

- report from Jan Mountney, Wycliffe worker in the Ngaanyatjarra area

time immemorial.

4. We call upon all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to claim this day, **22nd August as Aboriginal Sovereignty Day.**

5. We propose that Sovereignty Day be a Day of celebration, ceremony and acknowledgement by all Aboriginal Peoples that our ancient connections to our beloved lands have never been ceded or broken by the tide of history or by any foreign nation or Peoples.

continued on page 7 ->

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Aboriginal Sovereignty

Pastor Ray Minniecon

I am enclosing a very important document from our Queensland Representatives who attended the 40th anniversary of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra. At the Tent Embassy, we were reminded that in 1770, a foreign flag was planted in our part of the country without our knowledge or permission. Our Queensland representatives believe that we have a responsibility to change that history. We hope that this Proposal will encourage us to take that responsibility. Our Queensland representatives agreed that the attached Proposal be distributed as far and wide as possible. *[Aboriginal Sovereignty Day - see page 2]*

This Proposal is designed to take the fire and spirit of Aboriginal Sovereignty from the Aboriginal Tent Embassy to all Aboriginal Nations throughout Australia. The Proposal is to continue the struggle that the Tent Embassy stands for, back in our own Aboriginal nations and communities so that we can all share and celebrate the fact that our Lands were never ceded by our ancestors and that we will continue to make a stand for justice in our local Nations and Clan groups and reclaim our heritage.

The Tent Embassy stands for Aboriginal Sovereignty.

The 40th Aboriginal Tent Embassy celebrations was a great success. The Embassy is the site of our longest protest voice for true justice in our country.

As an Aboriginal Pastor, the Word of God is a great source of knowledge and wisdom as I continue to search and fight for Sovereignty and true justice for our people and for all understanding Australians. I share the following Scriptures which have guided my thoughts and actions.

As the Good Book says....

Acts: 17: 26 And He made from one common origin, one source, one blood all nations of men to settle on the face of the earth, having definitely determined their allotted periods of time and the fixed boundaries of their habitation (their settlements, lands, and abodes)

Deut 32:8. When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the territories of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God.

I pray that you will find them a source of strength and enlightenment also. We will continue to struggle against huge political, ideological, spiritual and social forces that have tried to force us into an identity and a history that is foreign to our ancestors and to us. Our historical connections to the beloved land of our ancestors must not be broken.

The contemporary national dialogue that has erupted recently, may have spoilt and interfered with this important issue and discussion in Canberra. But this incident must not deter us from achieving the justice we all seek for our country and for all Australians.

Recent protests on Herrison Island in Perth over a land deal proposed by the WA Government also centre on establishing a ‘tent embassy’ as part of the national indigenous sovereignty movement.

It also needs to be seen in the context of the National Act of Recognition - see pages 1-2 of this issue of Khesed News.

Intervention in NT Aboriginal Communities

Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory are in crisis. And the laws meant to improve the situation are failing. Yet in a matter of days, the Federal Government will try to extend most of them for another 10 years.

Since the Northern Territory Intervention began in 2007, reported suicide attempts and self-harm have more than doubled [1]. School attendance has dropped, and Aboriginal health is the worst of any indigenous group in the world [2]. The policies are failing -- but the government is ignoring plain facts and strong community opposition.

Indigenous rights movement *Stand for Freedom* has just launched a huge *Change.org* petition to block the bill... Labor doesn't have the numbers to pass it without Greens or Coalition support...

The Intervention policies have been condemned as racist by senior judges, human rights groups and the United Nations [3]. The new bill will extend complete Commonwealth control over townships and camps. It will increase punitive measures, while slashing funds to jobs programs. And it will expand a failed program that quarantines welfare payments based on school attendance [4].

Indigenous leaders say that if policies are to work, communities must be involved in creating them. *Stand for Freedom* is calling for a new direction based on "partnership, rights and respect" rather than top-down government intervention.

The government knows the legislation

would probably fail a High Court challenge [5]. They're relying on the Senate investigation passing unnoticed. But if their policies are put under the spotlight by a huge surge of public pressure, they won't be able to force it through.

- Bobbi Murphy and the *Change.org* team.
7 March 2012

Change.org is a website that allows anyone, anywhere to start, join and win campaigns about issues that are important to them.

The draft laws include alcohol restrictions and a controversial program that cuts the welfare payments of parents whose kids skip school, known as the student enrolment and attendance measure (SEAM).

The measures have attracted widespread opposition from NT Aboriginal communities, which say the laws are racist and that they were not properly consulted.

The Racial Discrimination Act had to be suspended to enable the NT Intervention to occur.

Ex-chairwoman calls for NT intervention use-by date

- *The Australian* March 29, 2012

FORMER Northern Territory intervention chairwoman Sue Gordon has called for an exit strategy to the emergency response launched in 2007 after the government yesterday committed to fund it for the next decade...

Dr Gordon said the new 10-year plan meant people could not see an end to the controls on their welfare and lifestyles in 73 remote indigenous communities. She said an exit strategy was crucial because Aborigines must be given power to take control of their lives. "I think the people are just getting tired of the controls on them."

Bobbie Hopkins: Discovering Aboriginality, discovering Christ

From *Eternity Newspaper*,

<http://www.biblesociety.org.au/>

CHRISTIAN LIVING | *Sophie Gyles*

Growing up away from her Aboriginal father, 20-year-old Bobbie Hopkins never really identified with Indigenous culture, wanting to remove herself from her Dad's family and just 'fit in'.

"I always prayed, 'God, why am I Aboriginal? I'm never going to be an Aboriginal, why the heck did you make me one? This is a mistake.'"

Despite this, she could sense there was something missing in her life. When she became a Christian at 13 she expected this feeling to ease, but it never did. "You know when you leave the house and you have a feeling you're forgetting something? That's pretty much what I've felt like my whole life.

It wasn't until she signed up for a Diploma in Youth Work with Scripture Union Queensland that she really started looking into her Aboriginal ancestry.

One day at college, Aboriginal pastor Billy Williams ("Uncle Billy") spoke to the class about identity and crossing cultures. Bobbie said it felt like he was talking just to her.

"I was just sitting there and I was thinking, how are you explaining my life – the tension between my white culture and my black culture?"

Uncle Billy pulled her aside after the talk and asked her where she was from. She explained she didn't really know. He shared his own story of discovering his Aboriginal family and encouraged her to keep searching and invited her to his church, Dhiyaan.

"God came to me like a gentle wind saying, you need to work this out. I realised, I'm an Aboriginal and I don't know this."

She started going along to Billy's church

and asking her father more about their family history. She discovered her Grandfather came from Cunnumulla, in west Queensland, while others in her family were south-sea islanders who moved to Australia to work the fields.

As Bobbie looked into her family history, she grew closer to her Dad, to the point where she felt comfortable inviting him to Billy's church. He's now a regular member of Queensland's Murri Church.



Bobbie says slowly, God's been revealing who she really is. "It's only in the last year I figured out God doesn't make mistakes. We are who we are meant to be."

"I remember the moment I thanked God for the first time for making me Aboriginal. That was such a surrender."

"Now everything's changed. I no longer look at myself and hate myself. I look at myself and think, this is who you made me, Lord."

Bobbie has spent the last week in Melbourne with the Grasstr'ee Gathering of young Indigenous leaders and helped lead worship at the Surrender Conference. Her assessment? "It was deadly. I loved it. These are my people and I didn't even know it."

VICTORIAN INDIGENOUS PRAYER NETWORK

*regular monthly prayer on Wednesday at Anne Green's home in
Burwood Ph.9888 9873 Wednesday 3.00pm - 4.00pm.*

- "... realizing that we're journeying together, all heading to the same place"
- "... one person can do amazing things, but together we can do even more amazing things"



- "... one good thing about this gathering is the input from the elders, and hoping one day we can follow in their footsteps"

- "... finding that we all got the same struggles"
- "... we all want to see the Kingdom of God come to our people in Australia"



- "... training needs to happen, but it needs to be in context and it needs to be culturally appropriate for us in our communities"



Over 50 young emerging indigenous Christians gathered at Belgrave Heights Conference Centre for three days on 19 March. They came from Port Hedland, Alice Springs, Beswick, Dubbo, Broken Hill, Cairns and many other parts of Australia, and were joined by a number of indigenous Christian elders, including Auntie Jean Phillips, Ps Graeme Paulson, Rev Ray Minniecon and Ps Harley Haywood. About half of them stayed on for the Surrender gathering after that.



Billy Williams, Co-ordinator, Jisas Wantaim

There has been nothing like this since the early 1970s, but this time there was one major change: *this was entirely run by indigenous Christians.*

There was an incredible sense of God's presence, with unity and love that broke down old barriers. Many talked and prayed together until 3 or 4 am – or even all night!

Here are some shots and comments from some of the participants, taken from the video by Peter Bergmeir on



- "... the love - the sharing - uniting as one"



- "... its really important for us mob to get together to inspire and encourage one another"

- "... I feel I can just embrace my culture more as an Aboriginal Christian woman and not feel guilty or ashamed"



- "... I just love this!"



- "... celebrate Aboriginal Christian diversity"

- "... about young people who are passionate about God and who've got a living relationship with Jesus Christ"

- "... money can be poured into our communities and solutions are not found. People who've got four degrees and they still can't have an impact on our communities.



We know that we can have an impact by the people that we are, and by the powerful relationship that we have with Jesus Christ."

